

Shark Valley Essay Winner - March 2010

Sophia, 4th Grade

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Everglades National Park

The Everglades National Park has a habitat called the saw grass prairie. The saw grass prairie looks like a meadow. In the saw grass prairie there are roseate spoonbills. They have pink feathers, but don't mistake them for Flamingos. In the borrow pits, there is blue green algae. Most blue green algae means the water is polluted, but this blue green algae means the water is clean. If the blue green algae would disappear, the alligators would too. A few plants in the Everglades national park need fire to live. The park rangers start fires in the habitats these plants are in. In the Everglades there is a bird called the great blue heron. This bird is usually four feet high. In the Everglades you can find alligator trails. It looks like a road made for alligators.

The Everglades National Park is unique because you can go bike riding next to the alligators. There are trails too like the Bobcat Boardwalk and the Otter cave hammock Trail. There is also an observation tower. If you go up to the observation tower and look down, you will mostly likely see alligators basking in the sun and in a borrow pit. In the borrow pit, you will see trees and fish jumping in the water. If you look down, you also may see a separation of trees. That is a trail. On that trail you see water on the right side. There is also poison ivy. Poison ivy can be green or red and has three leaves. When you leave the observation tower you will see alligators. The alligators let the birds get close to them. Some of the birds are tactile birds. Tactile birds are birds that fish by feeling instead of seeing.

The Everglades National Park must be protected so the animals don't lose their homes. It would be very sad to come back 10 years from now and see Shark valley as a shopping mall. We could preserve the Everglades by taking shorter showers. If you share your water with someone else, you could water the plants with that water instead of throwing it away. The water we use comes out of the Everglades. If the water leaves, we will no longer have water and the animals will not have a home. Both animals and humans in Florida would die.